DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 200 546 SP 017 802

AUTHOR Katz, Sheldon F.
TITLE Curriculum Innovation: Teacher Commitment, Training, and Support.
PUB DATE Apr 81
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association (Los Angeles, CA, April, 1981).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adoption (Ideas); *Curriculum Development; Educational Innovation; Inservice Teacher Education; Secondary School Teachers; Teacher Administrator Relationship; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Characteristics; *Teacher Motivation; *Teacher Participation; Teaching Experience

ABSTRACT

Ethnographic observations of secondary school teachers were conducted during the implementation of new curricula. Interviews identified relationships concerning: (1) teachers' experiences and convictions concerning support before and during the innovation period; (2) teachers' training and/or retraining experiences relating to the curriculum change; (3) teachers' personal and professional values and their expectations relating to the new curriculum; and (4) teachers' commitment during the change or innovation process. The teachers' personal and professional values and expectations were shown to have the greatest effect on teacher commitment to change. Even when training and support were lacking, if the personal and professional disposition were high, the result would still be a high degree of commitment for the new curriculum. The teachers in the study felt that personal and professional experiences provided a major source of training. The department chairpersons and the immediate peer group were perceived as support groups in pursuing new endeavors. It is recommended that, when curricular changes are being implemented, the active participation of teachers be solicited, that teachers be given released time to attend training sessions, and that a support system operate within the school during the implementation phase. (FG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED200546

CURRICULUM INNOVATION: TEACHER COMMITMENT, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT

Sheldon F. Katz, Ed.D.

Teachers College, Columbia University

for the American Educational Research Association conference,

Los Angeles, California, April, 1981

SP 017 802

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sheldon F. Katz

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Curriculum Innovation: Teacher Commitment,

Training, and Support

The Problem

The history of education and curriculum development includes the numerous accounts of attempts for change/innovation as well as implementation of a new curriculum. Mainly, studies in the area of change have not focused on the role of the classroom teacher and have not explored the perceptions of the teachers concerning the change/innovation. Further, investigations in the classroom have been conducted by administrators, change agents, or consultants, and as a result there are still too few studies of the change process from the point of view of the teacher. One current picture of a classroom teacher is that of a "facilitator" who accepts a change/innovation process from an administrator and facilitates the presenting of that process to the students. The classroom teacher now deserves investigation for his/her own thoughts concerning the teaching process and personal perceptions of an implementation of a new curriculum.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to determine if teacher commitment is present during the implementation of a curriculum change innovation. Another purpose was to determine the relationship of that commitment to the degree of training and support received by the teacher in connection with that innovation as well as to the personal and/or professional values and expectations of the teacher.

It appears to be meaningful and relevant to search for teacher commitment in change/innovation situations related to curriculum where the classroom teacher has received some degree of training and support. Furthermore, it is equally

meaningful to inquire if a teacher has any personal and/or professional values or expectations (that is, disposition towards or against) in relation to that new curriculum. This study investigated relationships between (a) disposition, (b) the degree of training received, (c) the degree of support received as variables, and (d) the related teacher commitment, if present, during a curriculum change process.

Recent Berman and McLaughlin (1974) studies and the work of Loucks, Newlove, and Hall (1975) at the University of Texas strongly indicate that a focus on the role of the classroom teacher is a fruitful avenue of research.

This study centered on classroom teachers during an implementation of new curricula and tried to determine the presence of teacher commitment during the process. This study should call attention to the possibility of commitment as a phenomenon to be used as a positive force during a change process.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions are in order:

Support: Support for a teacher implementing an innovation process must be primarily at the local or building level. Such support for the classroom teacher is cited especially by Goodlad (1975). Support will be operational when the following conditions are met:

1. Visibility on the part of the principal to act as a mediator between a teacher involved in a change/innovation process and those persons, in or out of the school building, not involved in the process.

2. The principal will not issue a negative evaluation to any teacher in the change/innovation process that would be based solely on the failure of, or negative results of, the change process.

3. Teachers should perceive some degree of encouragement from the principal during this change/innovation process.

Training: It first must be assumed that the teacher in the change process has taken the necessary courses as well as having completed whatever internship or student teacher is required, and is, therefore, eligible for certification as provided by the state in which he/she works.

Training will be operational when the teacher in the change process will satisfactorily complete college courses, in-services courses, special meetings or whatever such training is required for teaching this change/innovatin. Training and/or courses will bear upon knowledge of and method of teaching the new curriculum.

Curriculum: Curriculum is limited to educational opportunities presented to the student in the classroom. In this study, this curriculum will have been recently implemented in the classroom under observation.

Innovation: The Rand Report (1974) refers to innovation as "a practice or plan that is new to a particular school or local education agency and that, because it is new, requires (or assumes) some degree of modification or change in the behavior of principal actors" (p. 1). One possibility for the use of this definition is the mention of "behavior of principal actors" linking that to be the definition of commitment. Change and innovation are used almost interchangeably in this study.

Disposition: The personal and/or professional values and expectations of the classroom teacher in relation to and before teaching the new curriculum.

Commitment: In The Psychology of Commitment, Charles A. Kiesler (1971) wants commitment to be taken as the "pledging or binding of the individual to behavioral acts" (p. 30). Maxine Greene (1973) has written that "just as the phenomenologist would insist on consciousness of one's biographical situation in the effort to know, so would the existentialist insist on the necessity for initiative and commitment" (p. 141). She feels that commitment might well be an identification of one's own

values and/or ideas; a selection of what is important to oneself; a deliberate selection. Greene (19??) expands on that when writing in the Teachers College Record: "conscious endeavor to arouse others to discover . . . each in his or her own terms . . . what it would mean to 'live deliberately'" (p. 120), and later on " . . . wht it is to be human, to grow, to be" (p. 123).

A possible educational definition for commitment might be extrapolated from the statement in Dynamic Education Change (Zaltman et al., 1977): "Innovation is facilitated by the meaningful and early involvement of those who will implement change, and it is seriously hampered when participants are not involved" (p. 95).

"Meaningful involvement" might well be taken as a value, or indication of a value, as well as the responsibility felt by the participant in a change/ innovation process.

Short Discussion of Commitment

Little has been done in the exploration of teacher commitment in the process of actual teaching duties. The literature shows, according to DePinto (1975), for example, that attention has been paid to teacher commitment to the profession of teaching, but practically no attention to commitment while teaching a new curriculum. Gross et al. (1971) reach the conclusion that "a high degree of commitment is required for affecting change" (p. 25). Noteworthy here is the choice of words, and these authors express strong feelings when writing "high degree" and "required." Zaltman et al. (1977) paid attention to "meaningful and early involvement" in the innovation process, and then make an interesting observation when stating that "having a felt need is important in the change process. Equally important, however, is a commitment or strong intent to undertake remedial action" (p. 237).

The Rand Corporation Report Vol. VIII (1978) gives tje reader a paradox of its own. In the volume of review and synthesis, the researchers come to the conclusion that "our data indicates that teachers rise to challenges. Ambitious

and demanding innovations seem more likely to elicit the commitment of teachers than routine projects" (p. 25). This is, obviously, no small matter to report. Yet this same report emphatically states that

> specifically, the number of years of teaching had negative effects: the longer a teacher had taught, the less likely was the project to achieve its goals or to improve student performance. Furthermore, teachers with many years on the job were less likely to change their own practices or to continue using project methods after the end of federal funding. (p. 32).

That certainly does not sound like a teacher rising to a challenge.

A way out of that paradox is offered by two studies. First, Butts and Raun (1967) were concerned with an innovation involving a new science curriculum in the public schools. The study emphasizes building level support and training for the classroom teacher involved in order to have a successful implementation. These authors conclude

> that the longer a teacher has taught, the more value she places on a curriculum innovation, the greater is its impact on her, and the more she sees herself being actively involved in it . . . the longer a teacher has taught, the more receptive she is to new and fresh approaches to teaching. (p. 15)

The second study to underline the theory that teachers with significant years of teaching experience are a positive factor in the change/innovation situation belongs to White, Raun, and Butts (1967). They explore inservice teacher education programs designed to increased the teachers' competency with the new subject matter and to develop positive attitudes toward the new curriculum plans. Their conclusion is that teachers with previous experience are more aware of the impact of the change/innovation situation. They are also more perceptive of the training programs and of the views of the principal concerning this change/innovation (p. 18).

In what might well be an overall summary of the Rand Corporation Reports, McLaughlin and Marsh (1978) do comment that

> not surprisingly, the commitment of the project teacher is very important. The Rand Change Agent found that teacher commitment had the most consistently positive relationship to all the project outcomes . . . the importance of

> teacher commitment is axiomatic: Project success is unlikely unless teachers want to work hard to make it happen. (p. 72)

March and McLaughlin offer top administration support for the project collaborative planning, and an appeal to the teachers professionalism through complex and ambitious projects as reasons for eliciting teacher commitment (pp. 72-75).

Van Cleve Morris (1966) ties up several loose ends relating commitment to education and education to existentialism. He uses a personal example to illustrate the point that "my values turn out to be nothing more or less than my choices" (p. 39), and then links up choice with value with the idea that "in the act of choosing, man brings values into being . . once he chooses, he brings something new into existence, a 'way of responding' to that situation" (p. 40). When linking these ideas of existentialism to education, he points out that two major factors evolve, and they are (1) the project of creating meanings and (2) personal responsibility as a result of choosing and bringing values into being (p. 116).

In order to gain a better understanding of the definition as well as examples for commitment, it is helpful to turn to Sartre (1975). To relate closely to this study:

> our point of departure is, indeed the subjectivity of the individual and that for strictly philosophic reasons . . . we seek to base our teaching upon the truth and not upon a collection of fine theories, full of hope but lacking real foundations. And at the point of departure there cannot be any other truth than this, I think, therefore I am, which is the absolute truth of consciousness as it attains to itself. (pp. 360-361)

This becomes clearer when Sartre argues, "whenever a man choose his purpose and his commitment in all clearness and in all sincerity, whatever that purpose may be, it is impossible for him to prefer another" (p. 365). This ties up with the explanations of Greene and with the definitions of commitment as presented earlier, especially when Sartre comments, "one can choose anything, but only if it is upon the plane of free commitment" (p. 367).

A computer search yields little, if anything, in the way of teacher commitment as dissertation research. Nothing was revealed under the heading of teacher commitment itself and several titles only under commitment related to teaching.

Phenix (1971) and Greene (1971) provide thoughtful remarks for the conclusion of this section. First, it is Phenix who urges that, "no teaching can occur without a predisposition toward relation on the part of the teacher who seeks to shape the life of the student and to mediate to the student his (the teacher's) life of relation with the circumambient world" (p. 277).

Then it is Greene who philosophizes, "I have suggested that the individual will only be in a position to learn when he is committed to act upon his world." Then she explains, "If he is content to admire it or simply accept it as given, if he is incapable of breaking with egocentrism, he will remain alienated from himself and his own possibilities; he will wander lost and victimized upon the road; he will be unable to learn" (p. 266).

One might well assume that Greene talks about the road for teaching as well as for learning when she advocates that, "to plunge in; to choose; to disclose; to move; this is the road, it seems to me, to mastery" (p. 269).

Research Design

A descriptive research design was selected for this study, as historical or quantitative approaches would be inappropriateto the needs of this project. These methods could not provide insight into the actual interplay between the classroom teacher and a new curriculum.

L. R. Gay, in Educational Research: Competencies for Analysis and Application (1976), notes the following:

> A descriptive study determines and reports the way things are. Typical descriptive studies are concerned with the assessment of attitudes, opinions, conditions, and procedurs. Descriptive data are usually collected through a questionnaire survey, interviews, or observations. (p. 10)

Goodlad (1970), for his studies in Behind Classroom Doors, found successful data collection from three sources: interviews with principals, interviews with teachers, and observations of classroom activities (p. 34). Data for this study were collected in much the same manner.

Procedures

The procedures to obtain information for this study are placed in the two categories of ethnographic observations of classrooms and interviews conducted with classroom teachers.

First, this researcher conducted ethnographic classroom observations for two reasons: (1) to build a rapport with the teachers to allow for interviews that were open, candid, and thorough by developing "visibility" on the part of the researcher, and (2) to become oriented to the classroom while trying to determine if the teacher was actually teaching the new curriculum and if appropriate materials were available and being used.

Second, focused interviews were conducted with classroom teachers to identify and to determine relationships concerning:

1. teachers' experiences and convictions concerning support before and and during the innovation period.

2. teachers' experiences of training (and/or retraining) relating to the curriculum change process.

3. the teachers' personal and/or professional values and expectations or disposition relating to the new curriculum.

4. teachers' commitment during this change/innovation process.

Interview Schedule

The perceptions of the teachers involved in this study concerning the phenomena of disposition, training, support, and commitment were recorded in individual interviews. An interview schedule for each phenomenon was constructed. The final question for each section was to ask the teacher to rate experiences and/or feelings on a

basis of high, medium, or low. It was suggested by Lieberman (Personal Communication) that such a rating was more susceptive to responses regarding perceptions and would elicit descriptive responses.

Observations in each of the three high schools spanned a period of 3 to 7 weeks. No more than 2 or 3 observations, of different teachers, were made on any given day, and a period of 3 to 4 schools days elapsed between observations of the same teacher. In many cases, one calendar week passed between observations of the same teacher.

It was mutually agreed that this observer would be able to enter the room unannounced for an observation, and that if the teacher felt indisposed or unwilling to participate at that time, the researcher would postpone the observation until another unannounced time.

At each school, the participating teachers were interviewed within three days after the conclusion of the observations. The interviews were conducted privately, one teacher at a time, and those interviews were recorded on a cassette recorder.

In this study, observations and interviews were limited to teachers of 9th and 10th grades, with the exception of one teacher with an 11th grade class. Further, each teacher was certified for the subject or area by the state in which he/she taught.

Population

The subjects for this research were classroom teachers involved in change/innovations. Three secondary schools in the New York/New Jersey area were ultimately selected. Supervisors in those schools asserted that a curriculum change, essentially a departmental change, was currently in progress and that, in the opinion of the supervisors, the teachers involved in this project received a degree of training for the innovation and received a degree of support from administration in the school.

The three schools visited for this project are described here, but not necessarily in the order of visitation. This, in addition to not naming these schools, protects the identities of the schools and the teachers therein. One high school is located approximately 40 miles northwest of New York City. The school population, grades 10-12, contains 1400 students and 90 faculty members with 4 guidance counselors, 2 assistant principals, 1 principal, and 5 departmental chairpersons. Of the 1400 students, slightly over 300 (22%) are black, and close to 138 (10%) are Hispanic and/or other minorities. In the community surrounding this high school, the overall population contains 19% blacks and 8% Hispanics.

The high school is in a centralized area and draws its student population from several villages and towns. The majority of parents and guardians of these students are affluent middle-class persons and many commute to work in New York City. Information concerning the school and community was given to this investigator by an assistant principal.

The second high school is located in the State of New Jersey and is about 60 miles southwest of New York City. This building houses grades 7 through 12; however grades 7 and 8 are in a separate wing and rarely mingle with grades 9-12. Certain activities, such as the drama club, are open to all grades; but in the area of sports, for example, there are different teams for grades 7-8 and for grades 9-12. The junior high school wing (grades 7 and 8) has its own principal, attendance office, and nurse. The principal from the junior high school wing was interim principal for the entire building. Just before the end of the project, that principal went back to the junior high wing and the office was vacant for several weeks.

The entire population of the high school is 1095 students. Of these, 290 are in the junior high school wing and the remaining 805 are spread almost evenly over grades 9-12. Fourteen special education students are not on the grade rosters.

There are 10 black students in grades 9-12 and 3 Hispanics. The area is essentially composed of what one would label "blue collar" workers, according to the chairperson interviewed.

The final high school is located approximately 25 miles northwest of New York City. This school contains grades 9 through 12, and the total number of students is 1185. Of that number, 315 are black, 20 are Asian, 4 are identified as Alaskan (rather than American), 36 are Hispanics, and the remaining 810 are white. Again, the students are drawn from several surrounding towns and villages.

In this area, the percentage of blacks is approximately 20% and that of Hispanics is 10%. The figures concerning school population and information about the area was volunteered by the secretary to the principal and were taken from the attendance records.

Observations

The first method of collecting information was by making ethnographic observations of those teachers participating in this study. According to Geertz (1973), "ethnograph is thick description" (p. 9). He elaborates on this with the instruction that the "ethnographer 'inscribes' a social discourse: he writes it down. In doing so, he turns it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in its inscription and can be reconsulted" (p. 19).

Geertz adds to a definition of an ethnographic account when he states that:

> So, there are three characteristics of ethnographic description: it is interpretive; what is is interpretive of is the flow of social discourse; and the interpretating involved consists in trying to rescue the "said" of such discourse from its perishing occasions and fix it in perusable terms. (p. 20).

It must be noted that the observations, in this case, went beyond the "said" in the classroom. Dasho et al. (n.d.), in the Training Manual for Ethnographic Data Collection developed at the Far West Laboratory, show that observers included

actions and dialogue as events where necessary.

The ethnographic observations are not to be interpreted as universal in meaning for all teachers and/or all classrooms during the implementation of a new curriculum. Griffin (1977) has noted that "each school year has its own integrity" (n.p.) and therefore what occurs during a particular year must be interpreted on its own terms. He then extended that to "each school also has its own integrity" (n.p.). Each school has its own culture which does not necessarily have universal meaning for the entire educational system.

Geertz enlarges his definition:

> The fourth characteristic . . . at least as I practice it, is microscopic. The notion that one can find the essence of national societies, civilizations, great religions, or whatever summed up and simplified in so-called "typical" small towns and villages is palpable nonsense. (p. 20)

This study is of the classroom teacher during the implementation of a new curriculum. According to Geertz, "the locus of study is not the object of study. Anthropologists don't study villages . . . they study in villages . . . it is not the world in a teacup" (p. 23). This study takes place in a classroom and the focus is on the teacher.

Emphasis for the importance of observation in a schoolroom and for noting various relationships is provided by the Rand Corporation Report, Vo. 5 (1975):

> The local institution setting was by far the most important factor in determining project outcomes . . . the most important elements were high teacher morale and willingness to do extra work and the support of the principal. (p 7)

One of the criteria to determine teacher commitment, in this author's study, is the teacher's perception of his/her own extra work and extra hours concerning the new curriculum.

Further, in all cases this researcher was provided with a curriculum guide before proceeding with the study. In addition, maps of the interiors of all classrooms

were sketched, as suggested by the training manual of the Far West Laboratory. Pictures were taken of certain classrooms and a floor plan was obtained.

Teachers in This Study

The teachers in this study identified and recognized the phenomena of disposition, training, support, and commitment. Further, the teachers understood and affirmed the definitions of these phenomena as presented in this paper and those teachers were able to relate those factors to their own feelings in order to place a rating of "high," "medium," or "low" to them. At no time did a teacher refuse to comment on or to rate the phenomena under discussion. The terms of support and training were slightly more familiar to the teachers and they were able to give overt examples of these when requested. For disposition and commitment, the teachers, in several cases, asked for the definition to be repeated and were more thoughtful before giving examples.

One major purpose of this study was to explore the relationship of disposition, training, and support to teacher commitment, where present, during the implementation of a new curriculum. All the persons involved in this study agreed that a new curriculum was in the process of implementation. Further, teacher commitment was present in all cases, as so perceived by the teachers in this study, and its importance was constantly noted through the interviews with the teachers.

The factor of a teacher's personal and professional values and expectations (disposition) were shown to have the greatest effect on teacher commitment. Indeed, the findings demonstrate that when the teacher discovers a "sort of pre-commitment" towards the new curriculum, then a commitment to teach it will result in a like strength. Where the disposition is high, but the training and support are medium or less, the result will still be a high commitment towards the new curriculum. Conversely, a medium or low disposition will result in the same type of commitment even with a high feeling of support and/or training. College courses and/or training

were not as effective as the literature predicted. The teachers revealed that they would prefer some ongoing training such as meetings, conferences, and workshops.

The relationship between training and/or support and commitment was not as strong and appeared to be less important than disposition. Indeed, where several authors (Sarason, 1971; Lieberman, 1973) have used the word "crucial" when speaking of the role of the principal, one school operated rather smoothly with an acting principal who resigned during this study and left the school, with no one in that office. The findings lead to speculation that on a secondary level at least, a supportive principal will have a positive effect on the new curriculum, but that a strong chairperson has more influence with the teachers involved in a change/ innovation situation.

Conclusions

These secondary school teachers were observed in the classroom setting in order to determine if the new curricula were actually being presented and if materials related to these new curricula were available and utilized by the teachers. Further, classroom observations would display an interest in the classroom teacher by this researcher, and therefore the responses to the interview schedule would be truly candid.

The teachers were straightforward in corresponding to the interview schedule and volunteered information. These teachers did not feel threatened in any sense and they did not appear to be hostile or cynical in their responses. Further, as was demonstrated by the findings, these teachers did indeed plan for and present new curricula. Most importantly, the findings for the classroom observations do reveal that each observed class period and resulting lesson related, in some manner at least, to the new curricula. The conclusion on the part of this researcher is that the teachers in this study did understand, relate to, and present the new curricula.

According to the findings, then, materials related to the new curricula being taught were available and were integrated into the teaching methods and styles of the teachers participating in this study. Further, where it was deemed necessary to create additional materials for use in the classroom, these teachers were able and willing to do so.

Referring to the Fox (1972) and Goodlad (1966) concepts concerning the building of a a curriculum, it is evident that both of these writers conceive of curriculum resulting from a value or series of values. It must be underlined here that the findings clearly demonstrate that the strong and important relationship, among the phenomena being studied, is between disposition and teacher commitment. This is the most direct relationship found in this study.

The perceptions of teachers in this study are at odds with the literature (for example, Fox & Lippitt, 1964; Fullan, 1972) concerning the importance of teaches training. Of the 15 teachers in the study, 10 perceived training to be lower on the scale than commitment.

The findings concerning teacher training lead to the speculation that effective teacher training as perceived by the classroom teacher may be more a matter of personal experiences than course work. A pattern emerged of unconventional training, or training outside the college or university or even the school district.

Therefore, a conclusion may be drawn here from the perceptions of these teachers in this study concerning teacher training. That is, teachers are aware that personal and professional experiences provide a major source of training for them. The professional expectations of these teachers have led them to search for methodology as well as content material related to the new curriculum being taught.

The findings further demonstrate a lack of a strong relationship between support for the teacher and teacher commitment. Again, Sarason (1971), Lieberman

and Shiman (1973), and Smith and Keith (1971) among others have emphasized the importance of the role of the principal and the resulting support for the teacher. Yet, as perceived by the teachers in this study, the concept of support by secondary school teachers is, perhaps, of less importance than disposition.

Therefore, a conclusion concerning the phenomenon of support could be that the secondary school teachers perceived the department chairpersons as the ones who supplied such support. Perhaps the centralization of high schools, resulting in larger student enrollments and more faculty members than non-centralized schools, and the departmentalization of subjects and disciplines translates into different structures and concepts of support by the teachers and by the administrators. High school principals cannot offer the personal service, attention, and support to teachers that, for example, the principals of smaller and non-departmental elementary schools do.

Another consideration is that teachers seek support from their immediate peer group. The manner and type of support for the classroom teacher involved in a change/innovation situation now requires new concepts. Support in relation to training, to peer groups, and to individual colleagues is a factor to be reconsidered and to be pursued.

Teaches involvement in the planning of the implementation of a new curriculum is another important factor to be considered here as related to the teachers' disposition and commitment to teach the new curriculum. Studies, such as Flynn (1975) and Knoop and O'Reilly (1975), refer to this type of planning and involvement. The findings concerning the teachers participating in this study demonstrate a definite relationship between the involvement of teachers for creating and planning the new curriculum and the strength of their commitment to implementation.

A conclusion to be drawn is that teachers involved in the planning of the new curriculum will be more disposed to teach it and to have a high degree of

commitment while in the process of teaching it.

A relationship may be considered between the search for or creation of materials concerning a new curriculum and the commitment of a classroom teacher. That is, the teacher is, in some way, involved with the construction and direction of a new curriculum and has some autonomy about what and how this new curriculum will be taught. Therefore, it is believed by this researcher that the conscious effort of the classroom teacher to be concerned about, to be seeking for, and to construct materials for the new curriculum is related to the degree of commitment to teach it.

Also, teachers in this study were able to identify, as examples of commitment, activities such as extra time spent on preparing for the new curriculum, more hours passed in grading papers, placing comments on papers, and using after-school hours to obtain related materials for the course. As mentioned previously, investigators for the Rand Study asked the question about "working harder" in order to obtain a degree of teacher commitment during the implementation of a new curriculum. Thus, one might conclude that there is a connection between the extra time and extra effort spent on the new curriculum and a degree of the commitment of the teacher to teach it.

Most of the teachers reported that they did reflect on the curriculum before the start of the school year. The teachers perceived such reflection on the curriculum and "taking the kids home" with them, figuratively, as examples of commitment. Commitment may be considered as an overt activity of which the teacher is well aware.

A direct relationship between disposition and commitment was established by the recognition of "choice" in the matter of teaching the curriculum. No teacher perceived the curriculum as being imposed upon him/her, and all the teachers reported some degree of disposition to teach the course. Teachers admitted that when actually in the process of teaching the new curriculum, they still perceived

a choice. Teachers who have a choice in the teaching of a change/innovation process will probably be disposed to teach it, that is, they will want to teach it. During the process of teaching, those teachers who make the choice to continue to teach it will have the commitment to do so. Choice, therefore, is related in some degree to commitment.

Underlining the areas of activities and choice as related to commitment raises the question of whether commitment is an overt factor of philosophy. A speculation here is that commitment is both a "state of the mind" as well as a concrete factor. A definitive answer to that question begs further inquiry.

Curriculum Implementation

The major recommendation concerning curriculum implementation is that there be recognition of the role of the teachr and the perceptions of the teacher towards the implementation and teaching of that new curriculum. Teachers who are involved in the writings of the curriculum and/or who have the opportunity to reflect on a new curriculum and to make whatever adaptations or adjustments he/she deems necessary will be more disposed to teach it. An involvement, or reflection with adaptations to suit the style of the teacher, allows the teacher to perceive a value in the new curriculum. The perception of that value is the major factor in having the teacher disposed to teach the new curriculum.

To impose a curriculum on a teacher without concern for the values or expectations of the teacher is to invite a situation where the teacher might well never become involved in the new curriculum. It is strongly recommended, therefore, that teachers be considered the starting point for the implementation of new curricula through (1) curriculum development, (2) shared decisions concerning the curriculum, (3) opportunity to reflect on a new curriculum to make whatever adjustments are necessary. This translates into active participation by the teacher to fulfill his/her personal and professional values and expectations when implementing a

new curriculum.

The next recommendation concerns training for teachers. Most of the teachers mentioned that they took time to study "on their own," to read up on new materials, or to talk to colleagues. An ideal condition would be to have released time for teachers participating in a change/innovation situation in order to attend advanced training sessions or conferences or gather with colleagues or experts to obtain training in methodology, pedagogy, and content related to the new curriculum.

It is also recommended that when a new curriculum is being implemented, a support system, one that is allied to the particular school, be placed in operation and with those persons who would (1) show concern for the teacher, (2) offer help and aid as necessary, (3) gather materials and equipment for the teachers where possible, (4) be a buffer between outside forces and the teacher, and(5) provide positive, clinical type evaluations.

This study has demonstrated that a teacher with a degree of disposition to teach a new curriculum will have a corresponding degree of commitment to continue to teach it. Thus, the first recommendation was that the teacher take the opportunity to recognize his/her personal and professional values and expectations concerning the new curriculum. Now it is recommended that the commitment of the teacher to teach that new curriculum be identified as a viable force. To understand where commitment "comes from" and what efforts are needed to encourage such commitment is now necessary. The re-thinking and restructuring of the factors of training and support are steps in that direction.

However, while it will be recommended that there be further study in this area, the implementation of a new curriculum does depend on the commitment of the teacher to teach it. The teacher so involved in such a change/innovation process must be aware of and attend to this commitment. Community and school officials would sense an urgency to "have the students learn something" from the new curriculum,

but time must be spent to urge the teacher to still reflect on the curriculum, to make the choice to continue to teach it, and make changes in the curriculum in order to retain the flavor of "newness" and of "something different." The recommendation, therefore, is that all personnel involved with a new curriculum should be aware of the teachers' levels of commitment and the attending factors to nourish commitment.

Further Studies

This study has been concerned with the identification and description of the four phenomena: disposition, support, training, and commitment. The study contains no absolutes and no definitive answers; rather, the study explores a few areas and raises more questions.

The phenomena of disposition and commitment, especially, are subjects for further consideration. The study shows that these two items may be identified, defined, and perceived by teachers in a change/innovation process, and that there is a strong and direct relationship between the two. Other factors, such as the search for or creation of materials, have some bearing on disposition and commitment of the teacher. Thus, these are areas for further study also.

The entire field of values or perceived values of teacners deserves more study. While there are a number of studies that do deal with values as related to the implementation of a new curriculum (Fox, 1972, and Goodlad, 1966 particularly), there are few, if any, studies that relate those values, not only to disposition as Fox attempts to do, but to the entire process of implementation and to the commitment of the teacher in the process of teaching.

For this author, the major area of recommended research lies mainly with the phenomenon of commitment. While commitment has been identified and defined here, the door is still open to further study. The teachers participating in this research demonstrated a strong and direct relationship between the disposition of the teacher to teach a new curriculum and the commitment of the teacher to continue

to teach it. However, as mentioned, factors such as the teachers' sense of professionalism, the teachers' search for and/or creation of new materials for the curriculum, and the teachers' activities (effort and time) spent on the new curriculum have a relationship to the degree of commitment of the teacher. These are factors to be explored further.

This study, it is hoped, has opened the doors to a number of other studies concerning the classroom teacher and the commitment of teachers when implementing a new curriculum.

REFERENCES

Berman, P., Greenwood, P. W., McLaughlin, M. W., & Pincus, J. Federal programs supporting educational change. Vol. 5: Executive summary. Prepared for U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education & Welfare (under a grant from the Rand Corporation), 1975.

Berman, P., & McLaughlin, M. W. Federal programs supporting educational change. Vol. 1: A model of educational change. Prepared for U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education & Welfare (under a grant from the Rand Corporation), 1974.

Berman, P., McLaughlin, M. W. Federal programs supporting educational change. Vol. 7: Implementing and sustaining innovations. Prepared for U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education & Welfare (under a grant from the Rand Corporation), 1978.

Butts, D. P., Raun, C. E. A study in teacher change. Washington, D.C.: Office of Education (DHEW), Bureau of Research, 1967. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 021 805)

Dasho, S., Benedetti, B., Tikunoff, W. J., Rist, R. C., & Ward, B. A. Effective teacher education program: Training manual for ethnographic data collection. San Francisco, CA: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, Report A-76-14, n.d.

DePinto, J. W. A comparative study of the attitude, commitment, and personality characteristics of student teachers trained in contrasting teacher education programs (Doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University, 1973). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1975, 36, 12 A.

Flynn, C. W. Collaborative decision making in secondary schools: Difficult but worth the price. Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1975. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 103 958)

Fox, R. S. Innovation in curriculum: An overview. Interchange, 1972, 3(2-3), 131-143.

Fox, R. S., & Lippitt, R. The innovation of classroom mental health practices. In M. B. Miles (Ed.), Innovation in education. New York: Teachers College Press, 1964.

Fullan, M. Overview of the innovative process and the user. Interchange, 1972, 3(2-3), 1-46.

Gay, L. R. Educational research: Competencies for analysis and appreciation. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1976.

Geertz, C. The interpretation of cultures. New York: Basic Books, 1973.

Goodlad, J. I. The dynamics of educational change: Toward responsive schools. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1975.

Goodlad, J. I., & Klein, M. F. Behind the classroom door. Worthington, Ohio: Charles A. Jones, 1970

Goodlad, J. I. (with M. N. Richter, Jr.). The development of a conceptual system for dealing with problems of curriculum and instruction. Los Angeles: University of California and Institute for Development of Educational Activities, o966.

Greene, M. Curriculum and consciousness. Teachers College Record, 1971, 73(2), 253-269.

Greene, M. Teacher as stranger. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1973.

Greene, M. Toward wide-awakeness, an argument for the arts and humanities in education. Teachers College Record, 1977, 79(1), 120-123.

Griffin, G. A. Curriculum design and development. Lecture, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1977.

Griffin, G. A., & Lieberman, A. Behavior of innovation personnel. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education, 1974. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 093 857)

Gross, N., Giacquinta, J., & Bernstein, M. Implementing organizational innovations: A sociological analysis of planned educational change. New York: Basic Books, 1971.

Kiesler, C. A. The psychology of commitment: Experiments linking behavior to self. New York: Academic Press, 1971

Knoop, R., & O'Reilly, R. Participative decision making in curriculum. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 102 680, 1975)

Lieberman, A. Personal communication, 1979.

Lieberman, A., & Shiman, D. A. The stages of change in elementary school settings. In C. M. Culver & G. J. Jobani (Eds.), The Power to Change: Issues for the innovator educators. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973.

Loucks, S. F., Newlove, B. W., & Hall, G. E. Measuring levels of use of the innovation: A manual for trainers, interviewers, and raters. Austin: University of Texas, Research & Development Center for Teacher Education, 1976.

McLaughlin, M. W., & Marsh, D. Staff development and school change. Teachers College Record, 1978, 80(1), 69-94.

Morris, V. C. Existentialism and education. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.

Phenix, P. H. Transcendence and the curriculum. Teachers College Record, 1971, 73(2), 271-283.

Sarason, S. B. The culture of the school and the problem of change. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 1971.

Sartre, J. Existentialism is a humanism. In W. Kaufmann (Ed. and trans.), Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre. New York: New American Library, 1975.

Smith, L. M., & Keith, P. Anatomy of educational innovation: An organizational analysis of an elementary school.

White, M. A., Raun, C. E., & Butts, D. P. A study of contrasting patterns in inservice education. Washington, D.C.: Office of Education (DHEW), Bureau of Research, 1967. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 021 807)

Zaltman, G., Florio, D. H., & Sikorski, L. A. Dynamic educational change models, strategies, tactics, and management. New York: Free Press, 1977.